

Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-06 ARA-06 EA-06 EUR-12 NEA-10

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-02 ORM-01 AID-05

OMB-01 TRSE-00 DPW-01 SCA-01 SCS-03 /110 W
----- 025237

R 112309Z JUL 75

FM USMISSION USUN NY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1020

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 USUN 3298

PASS TO AID, EA/VN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EAID, VS, VN, UNICEF

SUBJECT: UN HUMANITARIAN AID TO VIETNAM AND OTHER MATTERS

REF: 1) USUN 3226; 2) STATE 158198; 3) USUN 1904

1. SUMMARY: THIS MSG RECOUNTS VONVERSATION MISOFF HAD WITH FRANCIS SMITHWICK (AUSTRALIAN) OF UNICEF WHO HAS LAST UN OFFICIAL TO LEAVE SAIGON. REMARKS MADE BY SMITHWICK, IN ADDITION OT OVERVIEW, INCLUDED COMMENTS ON: RESIDUAL UN OPERATIONS, VIETNAM RED CROSS, STATUS OF REFUGEE CAMPS, AMERICANS IN SAIGON, POSITION OF JAPANESE, WELFARE OF POPULATION, FOREIGN AID, RELATIONS OF SAIGON GOVERNMENT TO UNICEF. SMITHWICK, WHO HAD ASSUMED DUTIES AS HEAD OF UNICEF OFFICE IN SAIGON ON APRIL 12, AND AFTER EVACUATION OF MOST OF UNDP STAFF BECAME ACTING RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE, WAS EVACUATED ON JUNE 5. COMMENTS THEREFORE SHOULD BE VIEWED AS PERTAINING ONLY TO THIS PERIOD. END SUMMARY.

2. FOLLOWING ARE POINTS MADE BY SMITHWICK. SMITHWICK IS OLD UNICEF HAND WITH CONSIDERABLE OVERSEAS EXPERIENCE.

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PRIOR TO HIS SAIGON ASSIGNMENT HE WAS COORDINATOR OF UNICEF EMERGENCY PROGRAMS, A POSITION HE RESUMED AGAIN

AFTER HIS EVACUATION. AFTER COLLAPSE OF SAIGON GOVERNMENT HE HAD FREE ACCESS TO ALL PARTS OF SAIGON EXCEPT AIRPORT AND PORT AREA AND EVIDENTLY WAS IN CONTACT WITH REMAINING EMBASSIES, (FRENCH, JAPANESE, BELGIANS, INDIANS, SWISS) ALTHOUGH NOT WITH ANY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMS, WHO WAS HIS LANDLORD. MUCH OF FOLLOWING INFO MAY ALREADY BE KNOWN TO DEPARTMENT BUT SINCE WE DONT KNOW WHAT IS AND WHAT IS NOT KNOWN WE RECOUNTING ALL COMMENTS MADE BY SMITHWICK.

3. REFUGEE CAMPS. ACCORDING TO SMITHWICK HE WAS INFORMED BY LICROSS OFFICIALS ABOUT MID-MAY THAT ALL BUT TWO PERCENT OF THE ESTIMATED 200,000 REFUGEES IN THE SAIGON AND DELTA AREAS HAD GONE BACK TO THEIR HOMES. PRESUMABLY THIS WAS ACCOMPLISHED BY THE UNDERSTANDING ATTITUDE OF THE NVN MILITARY (WHO VIEWED THE REFUGEES AS HAVING BEEN PUT IN "CONCENTRATION CAMPS" BY THE OLD PUPPET REGIME) AND BY FACT THAT THE AUTHORITIES PROVIDED REFUGEES WITH ENOUGH FOOD TO LAST THE JOURNEY AND IN SOME CASES WITH BUS TICKETS. THE TWO PERCENT FIGURE ACCORDING TO SMITHWICK ALSO APPLIES TO REFUGEES ON PHU QUOC ISLAND. WHEN ASKED WHERE RELIEF SUPPLIES SUPPLIED BY SIR ROBERT JACKSONS' OFFICE WERE GOING SMITHWICK REPLIED THAT THEY MUST HAVE GONE TO THE NORTHERN AREAS: THESE SUPPLIES WERE NOT NEEDED FOR REFUGEES IN SAIGON OR THE DELTA. (COMMENT. THIS ASSESSMENT WOULD TIE IN WITH CONFIRMATION REPORTED REF (1) THAT SAIGON VIEWS EMERGENCY AS OVER. PUZZLING THING IS THAT SIR ROBERT JACKSON'S OFFICE IN CONVERSATIONS WITH MISOFF NEVER INDICATED THAT SO MANY REFUGEES HAD RETURNED HOME, PARTICULARLY SINCE IT IS MISOFF'S UNDERSTANDING THAT LOCAL IRC REPRESENTS IN ON SIR ROBERT'S STAFF MEETINGS. PERHAPS DEPT MAY WISH TO HAVE GENEVA MAKE APPROPRIATE INQUIRIES AT LICROSS HEADQUARTERS. END COMMENT).

4. FOREIGN AID. WHEN ASKED IF ANY DONOR HAD BEEN PROVIDING AID SMITHWICK STATED THAT HE HAD BEEN
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INFORMED BY THE DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMS THAT UP UNTIL JUNE 5 ONLY 6 VESSELS HAD CALLED AT THE PORT OF SAIGON; 2 CHINESE, 2 SOVIET; 6YC(0D,AR7F6!5FT8TW)
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HFFU*Q72.66686E-78(9GBA;-)
##)I>?<CU*T'?R
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VE0FAG:;CRW U*!GKC1;Y-\$KA/4\$,R<NQH
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OMB-01 TRSE-00 DPW-01 SCA-01 SCS-03 /110 W
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R 112309Z JUL 75
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 USUN 3298

9. RELATION OF SAIGON GOVERNMENT TO UNICEF. CONTRARY TO USUN REPORT NOTED REF (3) THAT UNICEF WAS ASKED BY SAIGON AUTHORITIES TO CLOSE UNICEF OFFICE, ACCORDING TO SMITHWICK THIS NOT EXACTLY ACCURATE. HE STATED THAT BECAUSE SAIGON AUTHORITIES WERE BENT ON BY-PASSING SAIGON UNICEF OFFICE TO TALK TO UNICEF OFFICIALS IN HANOI THAT HIS OPERATION WAS NO LONGER NECESSARY, AND HENCE HE OPTED TO CLOSE DOWN SHOP. WITH REGARD OPENING OF FULL-FLEDGED UNICEF OFFICE IN SAIGON, AS REPORTED REF (1) THIS ACCURATE; ALTHOUGH REMY, WHO IS TO BE DIRECTOR OF OFFICE, IS FRENCH CITIZEN, NOT SWISS AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED.

10. SOUTH VIETNAMESE RED CROSS. PRIOR TO FALL OF SAIGON GOVERNMENT SMITHWICK MADE ARRANGMENTS FOR UNICEF RELEIF SUPPLIES TO BE CHANNELED THROUGH SOUTH VIETNAMESE RED CROSS. IN HIS ESTIMATION THIS RED CROSS ORGANIZATION ONE OF THE BEST HE EVER WORKED WITH:

EFFICIENT, DEDICATED, HONEST. (COMMENT. THIS COMMENT INCLUDED IN THIS REPORT BECAUSE IT IS CONTRARY TO OTHER ASSESSMENTS WE HAVE HEARD FROM TIME TO TIME OF SOUTH VIETNAMESE RED CROSS).

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11. POSITION OF JAPANESE. SMITHWICK VOLUNTEERED THAT IT APPEARED TO HIM THAT THE JAPANESE EMBASSY WAS TREATED MORE FAVORABLY THAN OTHER REMAINING EMBASSIES AFTER THE OCCUPATION OF SAIGON BY NVN TROOPS. HE NOTED, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT ONLY THE JAPANESE AND THE FRENCH WERE INVITED TO ATTEND THE VICTORY PARADE; ALSO THAT WHILE THE AUTHORITIES DID NOT PERMIT RADIOS TO BE USED, THIS EVIDENTLY WAS WINKED AT IN THE CASE OF THE JAPANESE. WENT ON TO SAY THAT HIS JAPANESE FRIENDS INDICATED THAT EMBASSY WAS ALMOST TREATED LIKE AN EMBASSY.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PERSONAL OPINION, REFUGEES, RELIEF (ASSISTANCE)
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 JUL 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975USUNN03298
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750240-1171
From: USUN NEW YORK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750762/aaaacdmx.tel
Line Count: 190
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 USUN 3226, 75 STATE 158198, 75 USUN 1904
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags: ANOMALY
Review Date: 24 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24 JUN 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <03 NOV 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: UN HUMANITARIAN AID TO VIETNAM AND OTHER MATTERS
TAGS: PFOR, EAID, VS, VN, UNICEF, (SMITHWICK, FRANCIS)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006